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RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 0430

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABUJA 002061

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/FO, DRL/MLGA, IO/RHS, AF/W, AF/RSA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/16/2019
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [UNGA](#) [NI](#)
SUBJECT: NIGERIA LIKELY TO REPEAT LAST YEAR'S VOTES ON UNGA
HUMAN RIGHTS RESOLUTIONS

REF: STATE 116265

Classified By: Acting DCM James P. McAnulty
for reasons in Sections 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) PolOff delivered demarche (Reftel) to Nigerian Foreign Ministry (MFA) North and Central American Affairs Acting Director Rabia Shehu November 16. PolOff encouraged the Nigerian Government (GON) to vote against no-action motions on country specific human rights resolutions at the upcoming United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Third Committee, or at least abstain as the GON had done previously on a no-action motion and resolution on Iran. Shehu, responding that "abstention is often a show of support," said he would confer with MFA Permanent Secretary Ambassador Joe Keshi and MFA International Organizations Director Ambassador ¶M. K. Ibrahim regarding GON votes on Iran, Burma, and North Korea (DPRK) resolutions. Shehu added that, while Ambassador Ibrahim "makes the decision," he understood that Nigeria's Permanent Representative Ambassador Joy Ogwu enjoyed a "very good working relationship" with U.S. Permanent Representative Ambassador Rice.

¶2. (SBU) Embassy plans to follow up with Ambassador Ibrahim and his deputy John Gana, both of whom recently returned from the UNGA.

¶3. (C) Canadian Political Counselor Vicken Koundakjian had earlier told PolOff that his High Commissioner Denis Kingsley delivered a similar demarche to Ambassador Keshi around November 12 and that Swedish Ambassador Per Lindgarde had done the same with Ambassador Ibrahim on European Union resolutions on Burma and the DPRK. PolOff echoed to Shehu USG support for the Canadian and EU initiatives.

COMMENT

¶4. (C) With these multi-sided demarches, we expect that the GON will at least repeat -- if not improve on -- last year's record. The GON will likely abstain on all no-action motions and on the Iran and DPRK resolutions when they come up for a vote. In 2007 and 2008, the GON voted in favor of the Burma resolution, and we anticipate a similar vote this year. END COMMENT.

SANDERS